1 FIGURES IN PLOT PROBE

Ch. Item 4/3/67

7 Charged Here In Jailbreak Try

Sheriff Louis A. Heyd Jr. today filed charges of aggravated escape against six Parish Prison inmates who attempted to flee yesterday and a charge of conspiring to escape against a seventh man who planned the mass jailbreak.

The man who came up with the breakout plan, the Orleans Parish Criminal Sheriff said, is Eugene Sanner, 29, who has figured in District Attorney Jim Garrison's probe of the assassination of President John F. Kennedy.

Sanner missed the actual escape try because he was removed to Illinois Friday on four counts of burglary. He was taken to Illinois after a hearing before Criminal District Judge Bernard J. Bagert.

QUESTIONED TWICE by the DA's office in connection with the probe, Sanner reportedly had information that David W. Ferrie and Lee Harvey Oswald had been in Illinois gathering guns for an invasion of Cuba.

After the 10 o'clock roll call at the prison Saturday night the six inmates jimmied a pipe locker and crawled through the opening to the attic and then from the attic through a ventilation shaft to the roof.

They climbed over the roof looking for a way down. Later, they found a rope left behind by workmen who had been repairing the prison roof and lowered themselves to the ground.

THE NOISE OF the men climbing over the roof, however, alerted Dep. Sheriff Avery Alexander who alerted the prison staff. Sheriff Heyd today credited Alexander with foiling the escape.

Capt. Carlo Quartararo put into effect immediately the set plan of action used in event of any break.

The six inmates were spotted in the rear delivery alley running toward the outside gate. Dep. Sheriff Marshall

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Cassy fired a warning shot and the men stopped. They were cornered in the alley and returned to prison where they have been placed in solitary confinement.

SHERIFF HEYD SAID that he was "pleased by the quick response" of the prison staff, but stressed the need for more deputies.

He chided the City Administration for failure to provide the prison with necessary manpower and warned that the shortage of men could mean a "tragedy" for the community one day. He said that a handful of men simply are not sufficient to guard the prison properly.

The prisoners were identified as James Case, 19, 1525 Thalia st., awaiting trial on car theft charges; Jack E. Johnson, 23, Detroit, charged with forgery; Wilbert J. Smith, 33, Danville, Va., charged with armed robbery and possession of stolen goods; Richard Elsass, 20, Fall River, Mass., charged as a fugitive from Montana; Donald R. Ireson, 23, Danville, Va., charged with two counts of armed robbery; and Cecil R. Nanson, 18, Wichita, Kan., charged with auto theft and possession of stolen goods.